

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

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THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF YOUR LIFE

Monthly Memo to Local Presidents:

EVER since your president took office about a year and a half ago she has written and spoken repeatedly of the need for those of us at home to fight the battles on the home front with a vigor and courage equal to that of our men and women on the battle fronts of the world. Now the future of the whole world for generations to come is at stake, and within the next few months the decision will be made either to take the first steps toward an organized effort to keep the peace—or to refuse to do so and thus open the way for a still more dreadful war a few years hence.

We are living at the turning point of history; no other generation for years to come will have the opportunity and responsibility that are ours now. If we fail we are condemning our children to the certain necessity of laying aside all their hopes and plans for life and once again going forth to fight.

Do you realize that if peace should last only five years, our boys now in junior and senior high school would have to do what their older brothers are doing today and that many of these same older brothers would have to leave jobs and families and once again march off to war?

Do you realize that if war comes again after only ten years, our present Boy Scouts and even our Cubs will have to exchange their uniforms of peace for those of the military services?

Do you realize that even if peace lasts only fifteen years, our happy kindergartners and our preschool children who are the joy of our lives will be called upon to face all the terrible hazards of war?

Do you realize that if ever war comes again, we in the United States cannot hope to escape the civilian terror and suffering that others have endured these past few years? It will be *our* homes, *our* schools, *our* hospitals, *our* babies that will be destroyed.

We are united to protect children and youth; we want to give them every type of protection from harm, every opportunity for development. But what use is our striving if each generation brings with it a more and more ghastly conflict and we waste our national wealth in that most costly and destructive of all pursuits—war?

The United Nations are trying to take the first steps toward lasting peace. We know no plan will be perfect from the viewpoint of every nation; neither will it satisfy all the individuals

within any nation. We have to face reality and begin with the practical minimum of cooperation for peace which can be agreed upon now. We should be willing to take the first steps on a new road leading to world peace, and work to improve this road as we travel along it.

May I make a personal plea to each of our associations, all twenty-eight thousand or more of you? Will you do these things?

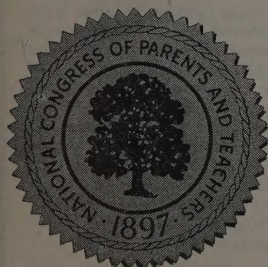
1. Will you at your December meeting, when you sing about peace on earth and when you think of the Child whose coming we celebrate, give some part of your meeting to this urgent need for public understanding and action regarding international cooperation? There can be no more appropriate time to talk of making a reality out of the dream of the ages than at Christmas.
2. Will you put the same amount of energy into studying and planning for peace that you do into your war activities? Both types of work are ours to do.
3. Will you start organizing neighborhood or community groups so that all will be informed, all will be thinking and expressing their thoughts to their representatives in Washington? Action at the grass roots is needed. No plan can accomplish anything without public opinion back of it.
4. Will each one of you send me a card telling me what you are doing or what you are planning to do in your association or in cooperation with others in your community? I should like to have proof that we are translating our objectives into positive action.

Your president is spending much time attending meetings devoted to international cooperation for peace and conferring with other national leaders, all of whom are concerned with this matter that transcends all others in importance. We can win a war. Can we win a lasting peace? Are we as willing to pay the price of peace as that of war? You, our members more than three million strong, are an important and influential part of the public whose opinion will decide this issue.

There were other things, too, I wanted to say to you this month, but they will have to wait. In comparison with this great issue they seemed insignificant.

Myrinetta A. Hastings!

President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers





WHAT OUR CONGRESS PARENT-TEACHER GROUPS *Are Doing*

The P.T.A.'s Are on the Airways

Nothing in the whole collective parent-teacher program has been more heartening, in recent years, than the success with which P.T.A.'s have enlisted the cooperation of local radio stations. Transcriptions and rebroadcasts of *The Baxters* are being made throughout the country this year as they were last, and in nearly every state in the Union local P.T.A.'s are also being given time on the air. Not only do they take advantage of the dramatizations prepared by our National Radio Script Service but they frequently write and produce programs of their own.

Last winter, for example, station WJOB in Hammond, Indiana, allotted 15 minutes a week to the Hammond Council of Parents and Teachers for more than three months, and each broadcast was put on by a different local association. Mrs. J. Ralston Miller of the Hammond Council has sent the National Office a copy of the card that notified P.T.A. members of this series of programs. On it, among other things, are the titles of the broadcasts—many of them taken from articles in the *National Parent-Teacher*. Most of them had to do with children at home and at school and the effect of war on children.

This project was an interesting one for several reasons. The direct-mail publicity was a fine idea. It was a fine idea, too, for the local associations—banded together under the sponsorship of the council—to be given an opportunity to be heard individually. (This device, incidentally, assures a substantial listening audience.) The use of sound, informative, and interesting material from the Magazine was also highly commendable. May the Hammond Council long continue its cooperative efforts toward parent-teacher education by radio!

An "In-School" Center

All of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and the communities surrounding it are watching with interest one of the projects of the Daniel Webster P.T.A. The project is an in-school center where the children of fathers in the armed services can play, supervised at all times. Adequate meals are served to the children at nominal cost.

A Newly Formed P.T.A. Reports

Sometimes we say more when we think we have nothing to say than when we think we have a good deal to say! That may sound like a paradox, but Mrs. George Chatterton, state president of the Wisconsin Congress, offers evidence to prove that it isn't. One of the most terse and challenging statements of the work of a newly formed parent-teacher association came to her from B. C. Curtiss, secretary of the Morgandale P.T.A. in Milwaukee, in a letter explaining why he had nothing whatever to report.

"We have done so little regarding study groups and projects," he wrote, "that we did not choose to submit our Achievement Questionnaire. . . .

"However, I can say that we survived the year, raised our membership, held regular monthly meetings, increased our bank balance, had fun, acquired a progressive president, and are now formulating plans for a more vigorous prosecution of the objectives of the P.T.A. for the coming year."

Building for the Future

The Southwest Council, Los Angeles, California, sent a copy of its report for the year to Mrs. William A. Hastings, National president. A well-designed mimeographed booklet, illustrated by two of the members, contains the complete record of accomplishments. Here are a few of the interesting items taken from its twenty-odd pages:

- Through the efforts of the council's sixteen associations, \$282,383.80 worth of war stamps and bonds were sold.
- Eighteen hundred men are on the membership list of the council.
- Sixteen local units turned in publicity record books for the year—100 per cent cooperation.
- A grand total of 2,618 items of P.T.A. news received publicity in metropolitan and community newspapers.
- The council was awarded a Blue Scroll, and 7 local units were awarded Blue Certificates by the *National Parent-Teacher* for securing subscriptions.
- Of the 316 principals and teachers on school faculties, 308 are P.T.A. members.
- Two members belong to the Gallon Club of the Red Cross, each having given at least one gallon of blood to the blood bank.

Small wonder, then, that Mrs. Edward T. Walker, of the Los Angeles Tenth District, in speaking before the Southwest Council, said: "Your projects have been tuned to the normal care of children; your planning has been based on an honest evaluation of putting first things first. Your compilation of reports is the story of a community building for the future."

A Winning Combination

Cooperation among members has enabled the P.T.A.'s of this country to accomplish much for children and youth. A striking example of what working together can do is shown in a report from Hampden, Maine. P.T.A. members there were concerned about the lack of water and toilet facilities at the Upper Corner School. There were only thirty-eight members in the P.T.A., but the men of this group, helped by some enthusiastic schoolboys, took up pickaxes and shovels and did the digging for the pipes needed to supply these facilities. The women provided food for the men and boys so that the work could proceed rapidly. Cooperation brought a much needed improvement in sanitation and health conditions.

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The Clark-Howell P.T.A. of Atlanta, Georgia, recently reported that it had secured 91 subscribers to the *National Parent-Teacher*. This news aroused friendly competition, and very soon we heard that the Gilbert P.T.A. of Florence, Alabama, had 100 subscriptions to report.

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LISTEN TO THE BAXTERS

Members in the area served by Station WMAQ, Chicago, will hear the broadcast on Saturdays at 12:15 p.m., Central War Time.

• Is your group doing something unusual that might be helpful or suggestive to other P.T.A. groups? Which of your projects are you especially proud of? Which ones have been most effective in remedying undesirable conditions in your community, in promoting worthy causes, in improving your meetings or adding to your membership rolls? Write us all about them, sending clippings or other illustrative material when possible. Address the *National Congress Bulletin*, 600 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago 5, Illinois.

How To *Stay Alive* as Long as You Live



P. T. A. STUDY COURSE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Prepared by Mrs. R. H. Jesse, National Chairman

IT IS by popular request that we are telling our Bulletin readers about the series of articles now appearing in the *National Parent-Teacher* under the title, *How To Stay Alive as Long as You Live*. Subscribers to the Magazine who are reading the articles claim they are the most unusual ever written, and they want us to "announce them to the whole world."

The reason for writing these articles as stated by their eminent author, Bonaro W. Overstreet, is as follows:

Ponce de Leon, scouring Florida for the Fountain of Youth, is no solitary figure in human history. Scientists in medical laboratories, working to isolate the causes of bodily decline; middle-aged men at alumni gatherings, hoping that song and reminiscence will give them back their youth; multitudes of women in beauty parlors—these, and others beyond number, make up the oddly assorted kin of Ponce de Leon. We might say, in fact, that he was the child of all humans who lived before him, the ancestor of all of us who have come after. For the search for some secret that will preserve youth is, perhaps, the most permanent search in which mankind has engaged.

Much has been accomplished, one way or another. But too many people have never begun to understand the real character of the youthfulness for which they tirelessly hunt. Thinking of it solely in physical terms—and trying to recapture it by noisy cavortings, or by coy behavior, or by hats too young for their faces—they have made of themselves pathetic spectacles from which youth turns away with embarrassed eyes.

In this psychological age we can begin to talk of youthfulness in quite other terms. For we begin to know something of its psychic character—of its relationship to daily habits and attitudes. And after all, so far as our happiness is concerned—the and happiness of those who live and work with us—the problem is not so much how we can stretch the span of our years as how we can stay alive in mind and spirit as long as our body lives.

Old age of the spirit is our human tragedy—and this old age may come upon people while their bodies are yet young. Or it may never come upon them at all, though they live to be ninety, if their habits and attitudes are those of spiritual youth.

Mrs. Overstreet presents the problem of age from the psychological angle in this series of articles. So far she has discussed:

"Of Body, and of Mind and Spirit" (September)

"The Raw Materials of Understanding" (October)

Beginning in November and continuing through May she will explain that:

You are as young as your words
You are as young as your habits of learning

You are as young as your admirations
You are as young as your courage

We will assume that all Americans wish to ensure a lasting peace through some form of international cooperation. This plan of study is merely to help clarify our thinking and to help us arrive at conclusions as to the best method to bring about this peace.

Suggestions

Use this plan in one of your general meetings, preferably December, since you reach more people in that way. You can then divide into smaller groups for more intensive study. In any case make the January meeting a time for decision and action.

Use Mrs. Hastings' "Monthly Memo" (p. 1) as the basis of your study program. Bring the challenge pointedly home to every parent by having a forceful speaker summarize (not read) paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Present the following problems for study at the next meeting:

- What responsibilities should the United States accept for world security?
- What should be our attitude toward a defeated Germany? Japan?
- What cooperation should the United States give in the rehabilitation of occupied and devastated areas?
- To what extent should we compromise with our present Allies in their demands concerning peace? With Russia? With England? With China?
- How much national sovereignty should we give up?

(Note: There are many other important questions which may be added if time permits.)

You are as young as your generosity
You are as young as your power to feel wonder and surprise

You are as young as your service to something greater than yourself

Mrs. Overstreet hopes that many readers as they follow the articles will check the material by reference to their own experiences. For she is convinced that all of us have in our own experience and our own memory most of what we need to know in order to retain our mental and spiritual youth.

September and October issues of the *National Parent-Teacher* have long since been completely sold out, but if you place your order at once you can still get the November issue. (You may be able to borrow the first two at the library.)

METHODS OF STUDY

1. For the next three weeks, divide into groups of not more than 20 for guided discussions.
2. Ask your local papers to cooperate by planning a series of editorials on the questions; by printing short discussions of the subjects by local leaders; by starting an "open forum" column; and by reprinting opinions of world leaders.
3. Ask the radio stations that serve your area to cooperate in broadcasting a series of 15-minute programs: panels of carefully selected local speakers; dramatic presentations by local groups; and recordings on postwar issues.
4. Ask other organizations in your community to cooperate in these discussions and to join you in sending to your congressmen the conclusions arrived at by the group.

FROM OUR LEGISLATION PROGRAM

International Peace

We support legislation that embodies the following principles:

1. Adequate machinery to insure international peace
2. Full participation by the United States in the establishment and maintenance of an organization dedicated to this end

Source Material

New Tools for Learning About War and Postwar Problems, "Recordings," pp. 56-60. New Tools for Learning, 280 Madison Avenue, New York 16, New York. Single copies free.

Fourth Report. Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, 8 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York. Single copies free.

Pattern for Peace. United Nations Association, 8 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York. Single copies free.

On the Threshold of World Order. Foreign Policy Association, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, New York. Headline Series, Number 44. 25 cents.

Essential Facts. League of Nations Association, 8 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York. 10 cents.

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Fathers AND THE P.T.A.

THE parent-teacher organization is not "for women only," though some people have had that impression. The truth is that more than 900,000 men—almost a million—are playing a vastly important part in the work of the P.T.A. We are especially proud of this large masculine element in our membership. When a man spends all day at his work and then willingly gives up his free time to the P.T.A. we know he is sincerely devoted to our program and will make a fine contribution to it.

Maybe, however, some associations have not made an effort to show the men in their communities how welcome and necessary they are. Perhaps this is one publicity angle that they have neglected in their membership campaigns. Why not examine the rolls of your own association to see whether you have done all you can to reach fathers, men teachers and administrators, and all other men who are interested in children and their welfare.

AROUSING THE INTEREST OF FATHERS

Most associations with large men memberships plan at least one feature on every program of special interest to them. Occasionally a luncheon meeting is arranged. Men do not like long, drawn-out business sessions, so meetings are called to order promptly at the scheduled hour, and the business sessions are handled without fumbling, hesitation, or delay. Plans are made for the meetings far enough in advance so that busy businessmen can arrange their time accordingly.

GIVING FATHERS AN ACTIVE PART

When they join a P.T.A. men like to be given something worth while to do. They like to have *their* experience, *their* opinions, and *their* abilities recognized. They like to be called on to express *their* views during the discussion periods freely and at length. This does not mean that they want to overshadow the women members, but it does mean that they want an equal share in the responsibilities and activities. When asked for suggestions about the practical aspects of some project, men can make invaluable contributions to the thinking of the group. They also have helpful ideas for promoting the legislative program of the organization, and they know how to secure the interest of legislators in needed laws for the welfare of children. Men members have been unusually successful in promoting the *National Parent-Teacher*, and more and more of them are becoming members of Maga-

zine committees. Many of our most active men are working on safety committees in cooperation with city and school officials.

One of the biggest problems before all P.T.A.'s today, that of juvenile delinquency, calls for the wholehearted cooperation of fathers. In fact, it can scarcely be solved without their interest and participation. Indeed, some of the most effective plans for dealing with this problem have been developed in associations where men and women members have worked together on it. When men have a real share in planning and directing a project, they will put forth every effort to make it succeed. Associations that have been successful in interesting men in their programs see to it that chairmanships are shared and that as many of the meetings as possible are scheduled at a time when men can attend.

FROM THE FATHERS' STANDPOINT

From the point of view of the fathers themselves, membership and activity in the P.T.A. can be extremely valuable. Actually it is part of a father's duty to be intelligently informed about the school activities of his own boy or girl. How many times fathers complain that they "don't know what it's all about" when some school situation arises that calls for parental attention!

But a father who has met his children's teachers, who is familiar with the school and its general setup, can take the lead in settling whatever difficulty arises. Attendance at the P.T.A. meetings provides the quickest and surest way of acquiring a background of information about the school.

INVITE THE MEN TO JOIN

We need 900,000 more men in our P.T.A.'s. There is work for them to do, work peculiarly suited to their talents, training, and experience. If they are not coming to your meetings, examine your program and see that it provides a place for them in your activities. Then invite them to join!

Include the NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER when you make up your Christmas magazine lists.



THE ANSWERS

Q. Why was the oak tree chosen as the symbol of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers?

A. The reasons for selecting the *oak* were its sturdiness, its usefulness in building, its broad, protecting branches, and its acorns with their potential perpetuation of life. In its symbolism the trunk represents the National organization; the main branches, the state congresses; the smaller limbs, the districts and councils; the twigs, the local associations; and the leaves, the individual members—each in succession drawing its life from the parent stem.

Q. Our association is celebrating its first birthday on Founders Day; consequently, we want to make our Founders Day program a very special event. Does the National Congress furnish material for Founders Day programs?

A. Yes. Every year the National Congress prepares a special Founders Day pamphlet filled with suggestions for the occasion. This year the pamphlet is larger than ever before—twenty-four pages! It includes three pageants; three acrostics; biographies of the Founders; suggested talks for Founders Day chairmen; a chronological history of the Congress; and suggestions for appropriate music. This pamphlet is sent to state congresses on a standard allotment basis. Extra copies are available from your state congress at a nominal sum. Get in touch with your state Founders Day chairman, or your state office, for further details.

Q. I am a local membership chairman. Can you give me suggestions for getting and keeping more men members?

A. The very name—parent-teacher association—indicates that it is an organization for men as well as women. One way to secure the interest of men is to have father members on the membership committee, thus affording them the opportunity to contact other fathers. Appointing men to the hospitality committee is one way to *keep* men members. New men members will be made to feel more at home if welcomed by men. You might also try putting men on the budget committee or getting them interested in legislation and recreation activities. These are all activities in their sphere of interest. In general, make use of men's desire for *action*.

DIAL IN ON THE BAXTERS

Saturdays—1:30 p.m., E. W. T.—
over NBC Network